

Commerce and Trade IGA – Expanded

Issue:

1. Manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism are highly dependent on the maintenance, expansion, and coordination of our transportation systems (highway, rail, air, and water).
2. Lack of infrastructure capacity for free flow of goods; i.e., border congestion, grade separations, additional border crossings, etc.
3. There is a need for improved connectivity for all modes.
4. Need to examine public/private responsibilities for funding and maintaining the transportation system.
5. Security issues pervade all forms of transportation.
6. Improving border crossing capability is an immediate issue for economic survival of Michigan and the rest of the country.
7. Need to look at both public and private sector in regard to border crossing; e.g., drivers being prepared at crossings; bridge authorities have technology to speed up the process, but haven't advertised it adequately. Using the technology is not mandatory.
8. Michigan's peninsular geography poses unique challenges to trade and commerce.
9. Conflict between the expansion of capacity to accommodate economic growth and the community that hosts the infrastructure.
10. Federal dollars should adequately account for international trade volumes between Michigan and Ontario in addition to fuel tax funding sources.
11. Michigan is not making best use of its Maritime assets for commerce, trade, and tourism.
12. Lack of public understanding regarding commerce and trade and the importance to support the necessary infrastructure, as well as costs and benefits. Public education on the importance of trade.
13. Need to look at connectivity and capacity to all Michigan borders and all modes of transportation.
14. Congestion is resulting in the lack of ability to maintain the competitive advantage and trucking commerce and trade in addition to being a detriment to the quality of life.
15. Commerce and trade should more fully utilize all forms of transportation (air, water, rail) to relieve highway congestion.
16. Any future boarder crossings need to facilitate employment, recreation, and transit issues.
17. Non-motorized transportation as a critical element of transportation system to support tourism.

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Goals:

1. Improve and expand the border crossing between Michigan and Canada.
2. Increase capacity and efficiency of transportation infrastructure to enhance movement of goods and materials.
3. Use public funds or incentives to stimulate private/public partnerships when public benefits can be demonstrated.
4. Consider manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism as key customers for Michigan's transportation system.
5. Focus on alternatives to resolve the invasive species issue in Michigan waters.
6. Increase intermodal in Michigan's transportation mix.
7. Preserve our existing general aviation airports.
8. Attract new business and investment to the region.
9. We need a coordinating agency over border crossings which includes a port authority, customs, and DOT.
10. Recognize the importance of consumer spending as a critical element of investment in the economy, tourism being a major component. Investment infrastructure should recognize this component.
11. Work toward open borders with Canada like European union.
12. Decrease congestion by increasing capacity and efficiency for all modes of transportation infrastructure, while respecting the surrounding communities and the environment.
13. Improve the flow of goods through customs by applying necessary human and technical resources, both federal and state, to improve mobility at border crossings.
14. Educate the public on how commerce and trade and the available infrastructure impact them directly.
15. Identify specific locations in the state of Michigan where transportation constraints affect commerce, trade, and tourism.
16. Match transportation investment with Governor Granholm's emphasis on revitalization of cities and anti-sprawl.

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Actions:

1. Examine use of technology at border crossings to reduce delays and form a working group for that task from the stakeholders. Conduct inspections of cars, trains, and trucks at locations other than directly at the borders (an off-site inspection).
2. Examine impacts on futuristic travel modes and movement of commerce.
3. Develop state-wide strategic highway/rail grade separation program and ways to fund it.
4. Work with other modes of transportation, besides shipping, to resolve the invasive species issue.
5. Continue to pursue congestion relief in addition to maintenance projects.
6. Develop a list of at risk general aviation airports and strategies for keeping them open.
7. Work with the short line railroads to address 260,000 pound rail cars impact on railroad bridges.
8. Railroads work with state and local units of government with the disposition of abandoned railroad right-of-way.
9. Continue to expand the use of technology to improve operations and reduce delays across all modes.
10. Increase revenue through diesel tax equity for Michigan.
11. Develop campaign to educate the public on the importance of commerce and trade and insuring the necessary infrastructure is available.
12. Establish additional ports of entry state-wide to improve capacity and flow of goods, including pre-inspection and pre-processing.
13. Tie border crossing funding to the value of trade at the border crossing.
14. Formalize a process to elicit input from private sector in making transportation funding allocation decisions.
15. Increase diesel tax to commensurate with gasoline tax.
16. Implement the coordinating agency at the border crossing.
17. Position Michigan to aggressively compete with other states for border crossing siting and funding.